DISTRICT-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS
The highest percentage of students in all assessed elementary schools agreed most that many students were either sent to the office for breaking rules or that students were often sent out of class for breaking rules.

According to Haesler (2012) there are multiple problems with these findings:

1) “…students see being sent out of class as a personal attack by most students, prompted by a teacher’s anger or dislike, rather than as a consequence of disruptive or unruly behaviour.”

2) The study found that only 42% of students were provided a reason for being sent out and less than 50% were spoken to at a later time.

3) In these cases, students are not learning from their poor behavior.

(Haesler, 2012).
Linsin (2015) found that sending students out of class, removing them from the classroom community, should not be our first option as students miss valuable instruction, are unable to see what they are not engaging in, and are usually unmonitored by the teacher.

Porter (2003) shared, “teaching children how to keep themselves in control in emotionally charged situations will help them enormously throughout their schooling and lives.”

Therefore, educators must teach students how to self-regulate and provide preventative measures in order to do so.

(Linsin, 2015).
(Porter, 2003).
Teachers should incorporate a cool-down spot and/or break area for students to proactively self-regulate.

Example: “The Think Tank” (image below) provides older elementary students with the option to self-regulate when needed. The spot includes a sign-out where students write their name and the date, and select if they are stuck emotionally, creatively, mathematically, or if they just need a brain break. Once they start the 5-minute sand timer they may choose to play with Silly Putty, use tools to shape Play Doh, complete a puzzle, build with Legos, or play with a fidget. An area like this, serves as a preventative center for students to regulate behavior before it may escalate.

(Porter, 2003).
Findings indicate a consistent lack of student involvement in making school and classroom decisions.

- The National Council for the Social Studies argues that, “they [students] need to engage in frequent opportunities to make daily decisions about democratic concepts and principles that are respectful of the dignity and rights of individuals and the common good….In other words, the voices of elementary students must be heard and taken seriously…”

- Further, the Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative “Kids Matter” shared that, “the sense of belonging, positive relationships and improved self-esteem achieved when children are active contributors in their school community are significant protective factors that support their mental health and wellbeing now and in the future.”

(“I think,” 2013).
(“Powerful,” 2017)
Schools must provide real opportunities for student involvement in decision-making.

- Begin with adult-led decision making, in which administrators and staff determine the area for student input. Input can be collected using a Google Form (survey), which will categorize and graph survey results.

- With time, schools may choose to increasingly involve students in adult-led decisions or to create a student leadership team, in which content is determined by students and decisions are made collaboratively by adults and student leaders.

(“I think,” 2013).
The statement, “students threaten and bully one another”, received 30%-69% of students and/or staff agreement in the following schools: Baltz, Highlands, Lewis, Mote, Richardson Park, Richey, Shortlidge, and Warner.

- The same statement received 15% to 30% agreement from students or staff at Brandywine Springs, First State, Forest Oak, Heritage, Linden Hill, Marbrook, Meadowood, and North Star.

- Only two schools, Cooke and RPLC had under 15% of respondents agreement.

We must work to decrease school-wide bullying.
Red Clay’s Mission is “to provide the environment, resources and commitment necessary to ensure that every student succeeds.”

In order to continue to fulfill our mission, we must reduce school bullying.

- Our schools must establish collaborative and trusting cultures.
- School-wide expectations for behavior must be established. Administrators and staff serve as student models and must uphold students to the same expectations in order to maintain a positive school climate.
- Involve our staff in professional development training.
  - DE PBS Bullying Prevention and Response module coming soon to delawarepbs.org.
▪ Analyze RAP (referral) data to strategize and implement means to proactively prevent bullying.

▪ Teach KIVA or other school-wide bullying program that promotes positive peer interactions, anti-bullying, and incorporates the following:
  ▪ Discussion about and respect for differences
  ▪ Scenarios involving conflicts and means to resolve them
  ▪ Assessment of students individual capacity to handle bullying situations
  ▪ Grade level and school level assemblies as deemed beneficial.

▪ Teachers should utilize learning opportunities to actively discuss situations and how to effectively handle them. Student conversations and ideas should result in resolutions.

("Department for," 2014, p. 7)
Schools must consistently apply discipline strategies that pertain to the students specific act of bullying. This reflects the school's intolerance for bullying and clearly informs students that bullying is not tolerated.

Involve the bully, victim, and potentially bystanders in interventions to determine the students motive and the needs of all involved. Next, determine supports, apply supports, and use data to evaluate student growth.

- Involve teacher, support staff, parents, anti-bullying organizations, community organizations, and police as deemed necessary.

(“Department for,” 2014, p. 7)
83% of the districts elementary schools agreed least with the behavioral engagement statement, “Most students work hard to get good grades.”

The cognitive engagement statement, “Most students try their best” received a lesser percentage of agreement than that of most other statements.

What does this data communicate?

- Educators must involve students deeply in their learning and employ strategies aimed at increasing student work ethic.
Administrators and teachers must collaboratively determine strategies that will be implemented to cultivate student work ethic. In planning, schools should refer to Elmore’s (2016) suggestions.

- Staff must model a strong work ethic.
- Educators should discuss and model a task. Then provide support and positive praise as the student completes it.
- Provide incentives for more daunting tasks.

(Elmore, 2016)
- Relate work to students personal goals and discuss the benefits of preparing now.

- Anthony Muhammad recommends that students complete an individual vision plan, which guides students and commits them to personal achievement.
  - What are my future goals? What must I do now to achieve these goals? What must I do in the future to achieve these goals? What commitments must I hold myself to? What can my teachers help me do to achieve my goals?

(Elmore, 2016)
(Muhammad, 2017, pp. 170-173).
To enhance the vision plan, we must ask: How can we incorporate community members and families to further support and guide our students in achieving their goals?

- Collaborative completion of vision plan at parent teacher conferences with student, parents, and teacher.
- Parent and community member career days to educate and inspire students.
- Motivational speakers to share their story and to promote the value in both exerting effort and leading a goal driven life.
- Extracurricular activities that bring families and communities into school and incorporate their involvement in our students education.
- Educators, families, and community members engagement serves as a model for students!

(Elmore, 2016)
(Muhammad, 2017, pp. 170-173).
Data models the need for student improvement in conflict resolution and enhanced relationship skills.

- Character building lessons, bullying lessons, and making use of active conflict based opportunities can serve as valuable lessons in increasing student relationships and ability to make sound resolutions.
  - More recommendations under *Bullying.

Second, survey results convey the need for student improvement in the self-management of their behaviors and emotions.

- Specifically, our students need to improve in thinking before they act and waiting for what they desire.
Self-management, as explained by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, “...can help children use appropriate play and social interaction skills, participate in classroom routines, and engage in instructional activities”.

According to the Child Mind Institute, self-management skills should be taught like all other skills (i.e. academic, social, etc.) In order to effectively teach students self-management of behaviors and emotions, Red Clay educators must regularly incorporate self-management instruction by applying proactive, active, and reflective learning practices.

(“How can,” n.d.).
(“Self-Management,” n.d.)
1. **Proactive Learning** can be completed individually, in groups, or as a class.

- Identify the self-management skill that the student or students need to improve in and create mock situations.
- Have the students determine how to best manage oneself in the situation (i.e. the appropriate response).
- Modify the situation and have students determine potential actions or decisions.
- Teach appropriate management strategies.
- Repeatedly practice the application of appropriate self-management strategies and follow-up actions.
- Reflect.

(“How can,” n.d.).
(“Self-Management,” n.d.).
2. Active Learning of self-management skills according to the Child Mind Institute, should be taught like all other skills.

- In active situations, scaffold the self-management behaviors chosen by the student.
- Provide support by encouraging the positive behaviors and instructing (not regulating) those actions that desire a change.
- Post-Situation, practice appropriate management strategies, breaking them into small feasible steps.

(“How can,” n.d.).
(“Self-Management,” n.d.).
3. Reflective Learning

- “When kids are part of an environment that’s reflective and analytic as opposed to emotional and fast-paced,” Bezsylko explains, “they can learn to make better choices.” Slowing down allows children to become more thoughtful, reflective and self-aware. “We need to slow down and model self-reflection and self-awareness and self-regulation for our kids,” he notes, “but it’s also helpful and good for us, too” (“How can,” n.d.).

- Collaboratively reflect on the students actions, the obstacle, effects on others and oneself, and discuss strategies to apply in the future.

(“How can,” n.d.).
(“Self-Management,” n.d.).
Staff relations are vital to school culture and climate, as these relationships serve as a model for students.

It begins at the top. Administrators must LEAD. By building a culture of collaboration and trust, and by inspiring others in their openness to ideas and willingness to embrace change in order to achieve the shared vision.

To enhance positive staff relations or to improve upon current staff relations, it is recommended that administrators and teachers collaborate.

(Zender, 2013)
- Analyze and utilize data and feedback on staff relations to improve school-wide practices.

- Meet with staff and school teams to discuss challenges in staff relations, and to set goals and construct action steps to achieve them.

- Build morale by regularly incorporating team building activities with all staff.

- Dive into new Professional Learning Community (PLC) practices. Building a collaborative community of accountable educators who take collective responsibility for student learning.

- Attend a leadership development program.
  - Potential Professional Developments: Harvard University, Leadership Communication; Harvard University, Managing Yourself and Leading Others; Harvard University, Building More Effective Teams.

(Mattos, 2017, p. 106)
(President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2017)
References


References


Muhammad, A. (2017). *Collaboration is a lifestyle, not a meeting!* (pp. 163-178). Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.


References


